

Homework Assignments



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e-Book 2016 International Psychotherapy Institute

From *Problem Drinkers: Guided Self-Change Treatment* by Mark B. Sobell Linda C. Sobell

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Created in the United States of America

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Homework Assignments

Homework Assignment 1

At the end of the assessment, Reading 1 and Homework Assignment 1 are given to the client. Homework Assignment 1 (Appendix 9.1) has two parts preceded by a page of general instructions.

Part 1

Homework Assignment 1, Part 1, asks clients to conduct a functional analysis (i.e., evaluation) of their drinking problem by analyzing their three most serious general problem drinking situations. Because clients must perform this task before discussing their problems with the therapist, the completed assignment provides the therapist with an opportunity to evaluate how well the client understands his or her problems and the functional analysis of behavior.

The therapist's role is to work with the client to insure that the answers represent a realistic and relatively complete picture of situations in which the client engages in serious problem drinking. Since there is a range in clients' competence with the task, the therapist will have to provide more assistance to some clients than others. Sometimes a client will not be able to identify three different general problem drinking situations. This occurs infrequently and can mean that the person's drinking is very routinized (e.g., every day after work) or is confined to only one set of circumstances (e.g., when out with particular friends).

If clients have difficulty in identifying triggers and consequences, the therapist can help complete the analysis. One way of proceeding is to ask the client to describe in detail the most recent occurrences of their identified situations. In their descriptions, clients often mention or allude to features that are recognized by therapists and can be probed to determine the triggers and consequences.

There are several other issues that should also be considered by the therapist when reviewing the homework:

- Do the problem descriptions capture the situations in enough detail that the situations can be addressed in a treatment plan?
- Has the client considered the positive consequences (rewards) as well as the negative consequences for each problem-drinking situation?
- Does the salience of negative consequences for any of the problem-drinking situations need to be increased for the client?

- How important is each situation described by the client?
- Are the consequences for each problem-drinking situation particularly negative as compared to other risk situations?
- Does each situation seem appropriately described as one of the client's "most serious" problem drinking situations?
- How frequently does each problem-drinking situation occur? At the bottom of each of the problem-drinking situation forms clients are asked to indicate what percentage of all of their problem drinking situations over the past year occurred in the type of situation described.
- How strong is the client's commitment to avoid problem drinking? The types and numbers of negative consequences identified by clients can aid in evaluating this.
- What types of functions would alternative responses (behavioral options) serve? The types of positive consequences identified by clients can help identify those functions.
- Is the information provided by the client consistent? The therapist should check the correspondence of the homework answers with the assessment data and probe inconsistencies. The probing should be done in a constructive rather than confrontive manner. For example, instead of asking, "Why are the two answers different?," the therapist could say, "I'm trying to make sense of all the information you have given me, and there is one point where I need some clarification. Perhaps you could help me."

Part 2

Homework Assignment 1, Part 2, adds important information about potentially low-risk drinking situations, and it has relevance for deciding whether a nonabstinence goal is feasible. This part of the assignment asks clients to provide information about their most frequent limited-drinking experiences during the past year, with a limited-drinking occasion defined as no more than four standard drinks and no negative consequences. Clients' answers have obvious utility for evaluating the feasibility of a reduced-drinking goal.

For those clients whose limited-drinking occasions are frequent, the contrast between triggers and consequences for problem and non-problem-drinking situations can be used to generate potential strategies for managing high-risk situations (the topic of Homework Assignment 2). Just as certain factors predispose to excessive drinking, other factors may help prevent drinking from becoming excessive. For example, a client may report that he or she never drinks to excess in the presence of certain significant others. Such information can be used in structuring a treatment plan.

The answers to Homework Assignment 1, Part 2, can also be used to identify thought patterns that are inconsistent with behavior. For example, individuals who designate a reduced-drinking goal but also report an absence of any successful limited drinking in the year prior to entering treatment might be asked to provide reasons why that goal makes sense for them. Similarly, individuals who claim to have difficulty identifying situational factors related to their heavy drinking but who also report a substantial amount of successful limited drinking can use distinctions between circumstances associated with the two types of drinking as a starting point for functionally analyzing their heavy drinking.

Finally, it is important to get an idea of how frequently the client has been able to engage in limited drinking successfully. The prognosis for someone who has rarely engaged in limited drinking may be different from that for someone who has frequently engaged in limited drinking (i.e., whose heavy drinking is an occasional event). In this regard, Homework Assignment 1 asks clients to estimate what percent of their total drinking during the past year met the limited-drinking criteria. Both parts of Homework Assignment 1 should be reviewed in terms of the client's Goal Statement, especially if a

reduced-drinking goal is chosen.

The vast majority (nearly 90%) of problem drinkers in our studies have reported at least some successful limited-drinking experiences. The list that follows is intended to provide readers with the flavor of clients' descriptions of limited-drinking situations. It presents selected examples of clients' answers to Homework Assignment 1, Part 2. The percentage in parentheses following each description is the client's estimated percentage of total drinking that was composed of limited-drinking situations.

When I refrain from drinking until after a good meal or with a good meal. (25%)

When with my children, either baby-sitting or visiting, I always watch my drinking very, very carefully—frequently abstaining totally. Also when driving. (5%)

At some “ceremonial” event—a birthday, a wedding, a social event that is in some way a “reunion,” more than just a party. (95%)

One or two drinks in evening, after supper, baby in bed, housework done, in my own home. (60%)

Usually after meeting my wife—after work—may go out for dinner or usually at home. (5%)

Social occasions—dinners, evening parties, lunch or brunch with friends. (35%)

Drinking at functions, parties where my wife is present. (60%)

Having people over who don't “get drunk.” Not wanting to look like one myself. (25%)

When I'm too busy or when I'm with business associates where the situation calls for limited drinking. (75%)

In a social situation with other light or social drinkers—people I'm comfortable with. (20%)

When I'm around people I want to impress as being a light drinker (e.g., relatives). (10%)

Sunday dinner with family—or any evening dinner with family and/or friends. (100%)

Going out to dinner—either at a friend's home or at a restaurant. (50%) Dinner with my husband; social events. (30%)

Dinner with lover and friends (at house or out). (95%)

Dinner or evening with others. (50%)

Having an evening at a friend's house. (75%)

Drinking during the week with my wife, after dinner, kids in bed, we play a card game. (40%)

Special dinners or functions with my girlfriend. (10%)

At home—just to enjoy a drink with my spouse either listening to music or watching TV. (30%)

In a controlled situation—where others were light or nondrinkers, or determined to maintain control. (20%)

In another's house; when having to drive home; important business lunch. (10%)

Going out with friends or family and being the designated driver. (25%) Business lunch or high-pressure gathering of business peers. (60%) Visiting friends with my wife. (20%)

External social situations, mostly family; Sunday/holiday dinner/at certain friends. (2%)

Two points stand out from these examples. First, “social controls” seem to play an important role in limiting drinking; limited drinking often occurs in the presence of particular individuals. Second, limited drinking often occurs in situations where excessive drinking would seriously interfere with task performance (e.g., driving, business functions).

Homework Assignment 2

Homework Assignment 2 (Appendix 9.2) has two parts and is given to clients with Reading 2.

Part 1

Part 1 provides information for clients about traditional behavioral problem-solving skills (M. B. Sobell & L. C. Sobell, 1978). It builds on Homework Assignment 1, Part 1, to give clients experience in using the problem-solving strategy by asking them to apply that strategy to the problem-drinking situations they identified in Homework Assignment 1. In brief, for each of their three major problem-drinking situations identified in Homework Assignment 1, Part 1, clients are asked to generate a set of options, or positive alternatives to drinking in that situation, and to evaluate each option in terms of its likely consequences. Then they are asked to decide upon their best and next best option for each situation, and to develop an action plan for implementing each of those options. Examples of clients' options and associated action plans are presented in Chapter 11.

Discussion of the client's answers to Homework Assignment 2, Part 1, is usually one of the more time-consuming portions of the treatment sessions. Although some clients write exemplary answers, others will need some assistance from the therapist in identifying alternatives and evaluating their feasibility. An important point to emphasize to clients when discussing Homework Assignment 2, Part 1, is that the purpose of the exercise is to give them experience in using the problem-solving strategy, and that they can use that strategy to develop plans for dealing with other problem-drinking situations beyond those identified in the assignments.

A particular challenge in working with problem drinkers is that one frequently encounters people who report that their problem drinking is primarily positively motivated. Currently, most treatments for alcohol problems are based on the notion that alcohol abusers' drinking is associated with negative affective states (i.e., they drink when feeling bad in order to feel less bad). For these situations, learning behaviors targeted at changing the situation and alleviating negative feelings might be a way to deal with curbing heavy drinking. However, if the drinking is motivated by a desire to enhance positive feelings (i.e., drinking when already feeling good to feel even better), changing the situation may not be effective. One approach that can be used with clients who report that their drinking is mainly to enhance positive emotional states is to focus on increasing their motivation for change. This involves (1) increasing the salience of the risk of consequences; (2) looking at what the implications would be if the

consequences actually occurred; and (3) lowering the value of the “high” experience.

Another way of proceeding would be to argue that drinking to “feel even better” is just a rationalization for heavy drinking (Nathan & McCrady, 1986/ 1987). This argument is at some peril, however, because it lacks an empirical basis (see Wise & Bozarth, 1987). Also, since it is inconsistent with clients’ subjective experiences, it also might lack credibility.

In our view, an approach that is more consistent with clients’ perceptions is that they must choose to forgo a pleasurable experience because they cannot afford the long-term costs that might follow if the behavior continues. The client should be asked to generate ideas that could help them forgo the added pleasure associated with excessive drinking when they are in a high-risk situation characterized by positive affect.

While there are probably numerous other techniques that could be used to deal with these high-risk situations in which clients drink when feeling good, they have not been systematically explored. Most research has focused on ways of constructively managing negative affect and stressful situations. The finding that positively motivated drinking is a frequent occurrence for problem drinkers suggests that there is a need to systematically evaluate ways of dealing with heavy drinking associated with positive emotional states.

Part 2

Homework Assignment 2, Part 2, is intended to identify areas of clients' life functioning that may relate to clients' problem drinking. It can form the basis for a discussion exploring clients' personal strengths and resources. The assignment involves completion of a checklist that asks questions about client's life-style. The answers to these questions may provide direction about changes to be made in major areas of their life functioning in order to deal effectively with their drinking problem. The checklist addresses different life circumstances that are sometimes barriers to recovery. The major areas include social relationships, leisure and recreational activities, and availability of alcohol. The checklist is geared for efficiency; the responses provide data that can be discussed during the session.

Discussing the checklist answers with clients also provides a vehicle for exploring how clients deal with various aspects of their lives. Additionally, the checklist provides a basis for a more in-depth analysis of the client's strengths and resources. The focus of the discussion can be on helping clients apply their strengths and resources to dealing with their problem drinking situations.

In identifying strengths and resources, one avenue is to ask clients about times they have successfully avoided problem drinking in the past. What has worked for them? What has not worked, and for what reasons? Resources that may be available to the individual should be identified. These can include social resources. For example, do some relatives or friends discourage excessive drinking, and could they be enlisted to help the client cope with high-risk situations? Similarly, what social and recreational activities do clients find interesting and satisfying? Could any of these activities be used as alternatives to drinking or to fill time previously spent drinking? Can social situations be arranged so as not to encourage drinking or, at least, so as not to encourage heavy drinking?

The discussion of a client's personal strengths and resources should be nonjudgmental when possible. For example, a client may describe an avoidance strategy that has been used successfully in the past, while the therapist may believe that an assertive response would be preferable. Since clients are being asked to do what they feel comfortable doing, as long as it is effective, a variety of strategies should be entertained.

Some Aids for Completing and Discussing the Homework Assignments

The following are some general guidelines that have been used in training therapists in the guided self-management approach:

- The therapist should stress to the client that the homework assignments are intended to provide examples of a general approach or strategy that can be applied to problem situations. The three situations identified in Homework Assignment 1, Part 1, are not meant to be exhaustive of problem drinking situations. They are examples for clients to use to learn how to analyze their drinking problem. Since the examples have been identified as the client's most serious general problem drinking situations, they will play a prominent role in discussions of how to avoid problem drinking.
- The therapist should not lead clients but rather assist them in identifying antecedents and consequences of their drinking. When possible, the client should identify the relevant variables.
- The therapist should insure that antecedents, consequences, and options are described clearly and specifically.
- The therapist should encourage clients to describe some situations that actually occurred that exemplify the situations described in their answers. This allows the therapist to probe for clarifications and to inquire about possible antecedents and consequences that the client may have overlooked.
- The therapist should explore whether the options are suitable for dealing with the situation (i.e., are they likely to be effective)? Has the full range of possible consequences been considered (e.g., an option may be effective in the short run but have long-term negative consequences)?
- The therapist should examine whether the client's selection of the best and next best option make sense? This question should be considered from the client's perspective.
- The therapist should assess whether the Action Plan is broken down into manageable steps?
- During the discussion of the homework, there should be explicit consideration of how the client's life-style relates to his or her drinking problem (Homework Assignment 2, Part 2, is helpful here). Since drinking has come to play a major role in the person's life, life-style changes may be necessary in order to avoid excessive drinking. At a minimum, the following three lifestyle areas should be probed:

—Availability of alcohol: Is problem drinking more likely to occur if alcohol is readily

available?

- Amount of time spent in drinking or drinking-related activities: If a great deal of time is spent in this manner, clients may need to fill in this time with low-risk activities.
- Relationships with peers, levels of peers' drinking, and social-drinking situations: In some cases, a change in social relationships may be necessary to avoid problem drinking. Likewise, the successful avoidance of problem drinking may bring about some changes in social relationships (e.g., the client may be avoided by heavy-drinking peers).

Aids for Clients

A listing of questions and categories that can be provided to clients to assist them in preparing their homework follows:

Questions

Where and when do you tend to do your most serious problem drinking?

What other people tend to be present on these occasions, and how do they act?

How do you feel before drinking and after you have started drinking?

Is your pattern of drinking different from usual in these situations?

What thoughts are foremost in your mind just before you start drinking?

What do you accomplish by drinking? What purposes does it serve for you?

Some General Categories of Triggers

Your emotional state (e.g., angry, depressed, happy, jealous, sad).

Your physical state (e.g., relaxed, tense, tired, aroused).

Your thoughts (e.g., having to make major decisions, worried about financial problems, bored, work pressures, wanting to go someplace else).

Presence of others (e.g., does your excessive drinking usually occur when certain people are present?).

Having alcohol readily available.

The physical setting (e.g., home, bar, club, sporting event).

Social pressure (e.g., others ask you to have a drink; you are at a party where others are drinking).

Activities (e.g., at work, working at home, playing sports, watching TV, playing cards)

Some General Categories of Consequences

Physical consequences (bodily sensations).

Emotional consequences (mood changes).

Social consequences (how others act toward you).

Material events (e.g., legal charges, financial debts, property damage).

What you are thinking (e.g., feeling guilty; feeling out of control).

In the next chapter, the integration of treatment components is addressed.

APPENDIX 9.1.
Homework Assignment 1

THIS ASSIGNMENT HAS TWO PARTS.

BEFORE completing the assignment, you should read “Understanding Your Drinking Problem.” It is important that you complete the attached forms and bring them with you to your next session. If you forget to fill out the forms, or forget to bring them in, you will still need to complete the forms before the session can begin.

Each part of the assignment contains a separate instruction sheet and answer sheets. You are asked to think of various situations that have been associated with your drinking, and to describe what you think triggered your drinking and what you think were the consequences (results) of your drinking.

In the **first part** of the assignment, you are asked to describe three problem-drinking situations that have been associated with your most serious problem drinking.

In the **second part** of the assignment, you are asked to describe the most common type of situation, if any, in the past year when you were able to drink only a small amount of alcohol and did not suffer any negative consequences. If you did not experience such a situation in the past year, write “none” across the answer sheet for the second part of the assignment.

GO ON TO THE FIRST PART OF THE ASSIGNMENT.

PART 1: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1

One of the best ways to identify factors that have triggered your problem drinking and consequences related to that drinking is to think about REAL drinking experiences you have had. In fact, that is what you should do in answering this assignment. Since we want to discuss these experiences with you at your next session, it is important that you bring this completed assignment with you to your next appointment.

Use the attached answer sheets to describe three general types of situations that have been associated with your **MOST SERIOUS** problem drinking.

- For each of the three general types of situations, complete a **separate** copy of the form entitled **PROBLEM-DRINKING SITUATION** (three copies attached).

On each form:

- Briefly describe the **general nature** of the serious problem-drinking situation. For example, “drinking with friends at a party,” “drinking at home after a hard day at work,” and so on.
- Then describe the types of **TRIGGERING FACTORS** usually associated with that type of situation. In completing the form, you may find it helpful to refer to the reading “Understanding Your Drinking Problem” and to consider such factors as your physical state, your emotional state, your thoughts, the presence of others and whether they were drinking, the setting, the times, what you were doing when the situation occurred, and so on.
- Next describe the types of **CONSEQUENCES** usually associated with that type of situation. Be sure to consider **both IMMEDIATE Consequences** (things that happened while you were drinking) and **DELAYED Consequences** (things that happened shortly or some time after drinking, but were related to the drinking). Also, be sure to consider consequences that were **NEGATIVE or POSITIVE** for you.
- Finally, at the bottom of the form indicate what percentage of your **TOTAL** problem-drinking episodes in the **PAST YEAR** occurred in **that type** of situation.

NOW YOU ARE READY TO COMPLETE THE THREE PROBLEM-DRINKING SITUATION FORMS.

Name:

PROBLEM-DRINKING SITUATION # _____

1. Briefly describe one of your three **MOST SERIOUS** problem-drinking situations:

2. Describe as specifically as possible the types of **TRIGGERING FACTORS** usually associated with this problem-drinking situation:

(CONTINUE ON BACK OF THIS PAGE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED.)

3. Describe as specifically as possible the types of **CONSEQUENCES** usually associated with this problem-drinking situation. Remember to consider both **IMMEDIATE and DELAYED** Consequences and also **NEGATIVE and POSITIVE**

Consequences:

(CONTINUE ON BACK OF THIS PAGE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED.)

4. How often did this type of situation occur in the **PAST YEAR**? Of all of your problem-drinking episodes over the past year, what percent of those episodes occurred in this type of situation? (For example, if about one out of every three times that you drank excessively it occurred in

this situation, you would write 33%).

Write your answer here: _____%

PART 2: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1

It is also important to know whether there were any situations over **the PAST YEAR** in which you were able to drink a **limited amount** (four or fewer drinks) **without experiencing any negative (bad) consequences**.

* * *

Because alcoholic beverages vary in their alcohol content, you should use the following definition of 1 standard drink:

1 standard drink is equal to

1 ½ oz. of hard liquor/spirits (e.g. whiskey), **OR**

5 oz. of table wine, **OR**

12 oz. of beer, **OR**

3 oz. of fortified wine (port, sherry), **OR**

1 ½ oz. of liqueur, brandy, or cognac

For example, whether you drank three bottles of beer or three 1 ½ oz. shots of whiskey or three 5-oz. glasses of table wine, each case would be considered three standard drinks.

* * *

On the attached form titled LIMITED-DRINKING SITUATION, you are asked to first indicate whether at any time during the **past year** (past 12 months) you drank four or fewer standard drinks and did not experience any negative consequences of that drinking. If you indicate that you never drank a small amount without problems, then you should not fill out the rest of the form.

However, if over the **PAST YEAR** there were one or more occasions when you drank no more than four standard drinks and you did not experience negative consequences of your drinking, then on the LIMITED-DRINKING SITUATION form you should go on to describe the MOST COMMON situation of this sort. Complete the form in the same way as you completed the “Problem-Drinking Situation” forms. That is:

1. Briefly describe the most common situation in which your limited drinking occurred during the past year.
2. Describe the types of **TRIGGERING FACTORS** usually associated with that type of situation. If you have difficulty identifying specific **TRIGGERING FACTORS**, simply describe in some detail a typical limited-drinking situation that you actually experienced.
3. Describe the types of **CONSEQUENCES** usually associated with that type of limited-drinking situation. Remember to include both **IMMEDIATE and DELAYED** Consequences.
4. Indicate the percentage of your **TOTAL drinking episodes over the PAST YEAR that involved limited drinking** with no negative consequences, REGARDLESS of whether the limited drinking occurred in the “most common” situation or in some other type of situation.

Name: _____

LIMITED-DRINKING SITUATION

1. Place a check mark in only one of the following boxes:
 - During the **PAST YEAR** (past 12 months), **I NEVER** drank four or fewer standard drinks **without experiencing any negative consequences** of my drinking. If you check this alternative, **stop here**; it is not necessary for you to complete the rest of this form.
 - During the **PAST YEAR**, there were **one or more** occasions when I drank four or fewer Standard Drinks **and did not experience any negative consequences** from my drinking. If you check this alternative, **go on** to answer the remaining questions on this form.
2. Over the **PAST YEAR**, in about what **percentage of ALL of your drinking episodes** (including **both** problem-drinking **and** limited-drinking) did you drink **four or fewer standard drinks and experience no negative consequences** of your drinking? (For example, if about

one out of every four times that you drank, it involved limited drinking without problems, you would write 25%.)

Write your answer here: _____%

3. Briefly describe your **MOST COMMON** limited-drinking situation:

4. Describe as specifically as possible the types of **TRIGGERING FACTORS** usually associated with this limited-drinking situation. (If you are not able to identify specific Triggering Factors, simply describe in some detail a typical limited drinking situation that you actually experienced.):

(CONTINUE ON BACK OF THIS PAGE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED.)

5. Describe as specifically as possible the types of **CONSEQUENCES** usually associated with this limited-drinking situation. Remember to consider both **IMMEDIATE** and **DELAYED** consequences. (The situation should be associated with no negative consequences. If you are not able to identify any positive consequences, write "none" as your answer.):

(CONTINUE ON BACK OF THIS PAGE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED.)

APPENDIX 9.2. Homework Assignment 2

Like Homework Assignment 1, this assignment has **TWO** parts.

BEFORE completing the assignment, you should read “Dealing with Your Drinking Problem.” As with Assignment 1, you should **bring the completed Homework Assignment 2 to your next appointment**. Otherwise, you will need to complete the assignment before your session can begin.

In the **first part** of the assignment, you are asked to develop **Options and Action Plans** for each of the three “Problem-Drinking Situations” that you described in your answers to the previous homework assignment.

In the **second part** of the assignment, you are asked to briefly answer a small set of questions concerning how drinking has fit into your overall **life-style**.

GO ON TO THE FIRST PART OF THE ASSIGNMENT.

PART 1: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 2

This assignment deals with **DEVELOPING OPTIONS AND ACTION PLANS**.

Attached you will find copies of the three “Problem-Drinking Situation” forms that you completed as part of the previous homework assignment. Attached to each of the completed “Problem-Drinking Situation” forms you will also find an **OPTIONS** form and an **ACTION PLAN** form.

OPTIONS FORMS

For each of the problem-drinking situations on its attached **OPTIONS** form **describe at least two**, and preferably more, **positive alternatives** (options) to drinking in that situation.

- Be as **specific** as possible in describing the options.
- All options should be **realistic** (they should be possible), although you may feel that you would

have difficulty putting some options into effect.

Next, **for each option** describe its **likely Consequences** (what you think would happen if you successfully used that option instead of drinking).

- Be sure to consider both NEGATIVE and POSITIVE Consequences.
- Be sure to consider both IMMEDIATE and DELAYED Consequences.

Finally, **taking everything into account** (for example, the likely consequences, the difficulty of putting the option into practice, your own preferences) indicate at the bottom of the OPTIONS form which of those options would be your **first choice** (best option) and which option would be your **second choice** (next best option) for dealing with that problem-drinking situation if it were to occur in the future.

ACTION PLAN FORMS

After you have completed the OPTIONS form for a problem-drinking situation, then go on to complete the ACTION PLAN form for that situation.

- Your Action Plan should describe in some detail how you could put into practice your best option and your next best option for that situation.
- You should describe what things you would need to do to successfully use each option.
- Whenever possible, break down the Action Plan into a number of small steps. This helps you to be specific, and it also helps you to keep track of your progress toward your goals.

The next page presents an example of a very detailed Action Plan. The Action Plans you develop may or may not be as detailed as the example, depending upon the nature of the problem-drinking situation and the options you select.

Name: _____

EXAMPLE OF A DETAILED “ACTION PLAN”

The following is an example of a very detailed Action Plan for achieving a goal of getting out of financial debt. Although this example is a plan for dealing with financial problems rather than for dealing with a problem-drinking situation, the principles for developing an Action Plan are the same in each case:

- The important thing is to describe what specifically is needed to accomplish the goal.
- It often helps to break the Action Plan down into small steps whenever possible.

Your Action Plans may or may not be as detailed as this example, depending upon the nature of the situation and the option you wish to put into effect.

* * *

ACTION PLAN for gradually getting out of debt:

1. Cancel credit cards.
2. Keep a monthly listing of all bills, their due dates, payment schedule, and up-to-date balance.
3. On payday, make at least some payment on all bills due and handle other related financial matters (for example, respond to past-due notices, call creditors and assure them that I intend to pay off the balance as soon as I am able).
4. Balance checkbook monthly.
5. Work overtime whenever possible to pay off debts more quickly.
6. Allow myself a small amount per month for entertainment or treats so that I do not become discouraged.
7. Use next year’s income tax refund, if any, to help pay off my most serious debt.
8. Make a list of debts from which I cross off each debt when it is paid in full.

NOW GO ON TO COMPLETE THE THREE SETS OF “OPTIONS” AND “ACTION PLAN” FORMS WHICH

MAKE UP THIS ASSIGNMENT.

Name: _____

OPTIONS

Use this form to describe Options and Likely Consequences for:

Problem-Drinking Situation # _____ (attached)

A. OPTIONS AND LIKELY CONSEQUENCES:

Below, describe at least two, and preferably more, options and their consequences for this problem-drinking situation.

OPTION # 1: _____

LIKELY CONSEQUENCES OF OPTION # 1: _____

OPTION #2: _____

LIKELY CONSEQUENCES OF OPTION #2: _____

OPTION #3: _____

LIKELY CONSEQUENCES OF OPTION #3: _____

OPTION #4: _____

LIKELY CONSEQUENCES OF OPTION #4: _____

(USE THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO CONTINUE ANY OF THE ABOVE, OR TO ADD MORE OPTIONS.)

B. SELECTING OPTIONS:

From the above options you described for this problem-drinking situation, ***taking everything into account:***

Which option would you select as your best option?

OPTION # _____

Which option would you select as your next best option?

OPTION # _____

NOW GO ON TO COMPLETE THE ACTION PLAN FORM FOR THIS PROBLEM-DRINKING SITUATION.

Name: _____

ACTION PLAN

Use this form to describe your Action Plan for **Problem-Drinking Situation #** _____

For the **best and next best** options for this problem-drinking situation describe an **Action Plan** that would allow you to put the option into effect.

A. BEST OPTION:

OPTION # (option selected as “best” on the “Options” form).

ACTION PLAN:

B. NEXT BEST OPTION:

Option #_____ (option selected as “next best” on the “Options” form).

ACTION PLAN:

(IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE; BE SURE TO LIST THE OPTION NUMBER.)

Name: _____

PART 2: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 2

LIFE-STYLE ASSESSMENT

If you are like many other people who have alcohol problems, your drinking may be strongly related to other aspects of your daily life (for example, the people you spend time with and how you spend your spare time). Sometimes successfully dealing with your drinking problem is helped by EXAMINING how drinking fits into your life. Your answers to the following questions will help clarify whether you should consider making some life-style changes. For each question, check either Yes or No. If you answered "yes," you may provide some description in the space preceded by "Describe."

1. Are a great many of your leisure, social, or recreational activities associated with drinking?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

2. Do you think you will need to change some of your leisure, social, or recreational activities in order to successfully deal with your drinking?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

3. Would not drinking at all, or only drinking small amounts, leave a gap in your daily schedule that will need to be filled in by other activities?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

4. Do you sometimes drink just because the alcohol is there, that is, because it is readily available to you?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

5. Do you usually drink in the company of others, at least some of whom drink as much or more than you do?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

6. Are there some people in whose company you would find it very difficult to not drink or to greatly limit your drinking?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

7. Do you have relatives or friends whom you can count on to support your efforts to avoid heavy drinking?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No

8. Do you think you will need to change any of your relationships with others (e.g., see some people less often) in order to deal with your drinking problem?

(1) Yes Describe: _____

(2) No